



AOT in Action

TOURISM WORKS FOR ARIZONA!

Welcome to AOT in Action, your weekly e-newsletter from the Arizona Office of Tourism (AOT).

A Message from the Director:

Good morning.

The 4th of July is just a couple of days away and if you're wondering how to spend the holiday, check out our calendar of events at ArizonaGuide.com. The calendar lists a variety of fantastic events and festivals that the whole family can enjoy. You can use the calendar to plan a weekend getaway or even a day trip to celebrate the 4th of July. The holiday is a perfect time to travel around the state and discover all the exciting opportunities Arizona has to offer.

I hope everyone has a fun and safe 4th of July!

Have a great week.

Margie A. Emmermann
Director
Arizona Office of Tourism

AOT News Flash

Governor's Conference on Tourism Silent Auction

The Governor's Conference on Tourism (GCOT) is seeking items to be included in this year's Silent Auction. By providing an item for the auction, your organization will be featured to hundreds of GCOT attendees from the Arizona tourism industry, as well as invited government officials and media. Your company's name will also be featured in the official printed silent

auction program. [DONATE TODAY!](#) For more information please visit www.aztourismconference.com.

Save the Date: The 27th Annual Arizona Governor's Conference on Tourism

This year's 27th Annual Arizona Governor's Conference on Tourism is July 11-13 at the Arizona Biltmore Resort and Spa. The program will be a dynamic mix of fresh industry information and resources that can help you plan for another year of marketing Arizona to audiences around the world. Breakout sessions and speakers will teach you how to take tourism marketing and promotion to a new level. With so many exciting opportunities happening nationally, the Arizona Office of Tourism and its association partners are committed to bringing you the most up-to-date tools available for tourism professionals. For more information and to register for the event, please visit www.aztourismconference.com.

AOT Welcomes New Staff Member

Beth Billings has joined the AOT staff as the new Research Specialist. Among her many responsibilities, Beth is charged with tracking the monthly attendance at state and local welcome centers and yearly attendance at tourism attractions around the state. In addition, she is responsible for maintaining the Research section of the agency's business Web site and is responsible for data analysis procedures and evaluating various research reports for future marketing efforts. Before joining AOT, Beth managed a veterinary clinic in the Washington DC Metro Area where her responsibilities included statistical analysis of industry related indicators to evaluate business performance and individual employee performance. Beth attended the University of South Carolina and attained a Business Administration degree in Marketing and Management with a minor in Hotel, Restaurant and Tourism Management. Beth can be reached at 602-364-3689 or via e-mail at bbillings@azot.gov.

Trippin' with AOT

Arizona Takes Part in Four Corner State Sales Mission

AOT recently traveled to Belgium and the Netherlands on an introductory Sales Mission with the neighboring states of New Mexico, Colorado and Utah. Many Dutch and Belgian travelers include all four states during a vacation to the Southwest, so this mission was a great opportunity to highlight the area and meet with key industry professionals and media representatives. The week long mission began in Utrecht in the Netherlands and consisted of meetings with the product managers of leading tour operators and area training sessions for their reservations and sales staff. Immediately following the Netherlands, the group continued to Brussels where they spent three days meeting with the Belgian travel trade and media. In each country the missions closed with a mini trade show and networking reception and dinner which were attended by leading travel and media professionals. For more information, contact Hylton Fothergill at 602-364-3706 or via e-mail at hfothergill@azot.gov.

Participate in La Cumbre in 2007

La Cumbre is the premier travel industry conference for the sales and marketing of travel to the United States from Latin America. This year it will be held September 5-7, 2007 in Fort Lauderdale, Florida. The event features a structured, computer-matched marketplace enabling buyers and suppliers to meet during scheduled appointments. Approximately 500 buyers and 90 press members from throughout Latin America will attend this event. Barbara Jackson, AOT's Mexico representative will attend on Arizona's behalf. If you would like to participate in La Cumbre as part of the Arizona Office of Tourism booth please contact Kristy Swanson for more

information at 602-364-3696 or via e-mail at kswanson@azot.gov. The cost for registration is \$1,000 for DMOs and \$750 for tourism suppliers. Travel expenses and shipping are extra.

Register Now for the 10th Annual Arizona Showcase in Hermosillo

AOT will hold the 10th Annual Arizona Showcase October 3-4, 2007 in Hermosillo, Sonora, Mexico. This event promotes fall and holiday shopping, attractions and accommodations throughout the State. This year there will be a special emphasis on weddings. On the first night of the event, a trade show for travel agents and media representatives will be coordinated. The second night of the event will highlight a charity fashion show with local models - specifically targeting high income families and individuals with a strong propensity to travel. The cost to participate varies from \$800 - \$2,000 depending on type of supplier and level of participation, plus travel expenses. Sponsorships are also available. The deadline to participate is September 1, 2007. Early booking discounts apply. Please contact Kristy Swanson at 602-364-3696 or via e-mail at kswanson@azot.gov.

Japanese Receptive Operator Sales Mission Expanded in 2007

The Annual Japanese Receptive Operator Sales Mission is scheduled to take place in Los Angeles, CA on August 2, 2007. This mission is an organized function that introduces Arizona suppliers and DMOs to the California-based travel professionals of major Japanese tour companies. The event features destination development seminars/workshops as well as a marketplace. The participation fee is \$250 for suppliers and \$350 for DMOs, plus travel expenses. In 2007 there will also be expanded opportunities for Arizona suppliers only including sales calls on Friday, August 3rd and a golf tournament on Saturday, August 4th. Please contact Osamu Hoshino for more information at 801-266-3345 or via e-mail at ohoshino@comcast.net. Space is limited and the deadline for participation is July 20, 2007.

Industry News

Senate Panel Passes Tourism Promotion Bill

The Senate Committee on Commerce, Science and Transportation Wednesday approved a key tourism measure, The Travel Promotion Act of 2007, a move hailed by the Travel Industry Association and the Discover America Partnership. The bill would establish an independent non-profit corporation to promote in-bound tourism to the U.S., create a travel promotion fund, using funds generated by a Visa Waiver fee as well as private industry contributions and establish an Office of Travel Promotion in the Commerce Department with a new under secretary to develop programs to increase the number of international travelers to the U.S. The office would also coordinate activities with the Departments of State and Homeland Security to improve the nation's visa and entry processes for international visitors. "This is a critical step toward rolling out the welcome mat for international visitors and we applaud the Senate Commerce Committee for this action today," said Roger Dow, president and CEO of the Travel Industry Association. *(Special to TA)*

AAA Predicts Record July 4th Holiday

AAA is projecting that a record 41.1 million Americans will travel during the Fourth of July holiday period, a slight increase from the 40.8 million that traveled last year. The AAA forecast is based on a national telephone survey of 1,950 adults conducted in cooperation with the Travel Industry Association. The survey indicated that most Americans will travel from June 29 to July 9, since the Fourth of July falls on a Wednesday this year. AAA said at least 34.7 million Americans will travel by motor vehicle during the holiday, while 4.7 million plan to travel by plane, up 3.5 percent from last year. A projected 1.7 million vacationers will go by train, bus or

other mode of transportation. Holiday auto travelers will find gasoline prices nationwide currently averaging \$2.99 for a gallon of self-serve regular, down 23 cents from a month ago and about 14 cents higher than a year ago. (*Special to TA: Travel Weekly.com; Modern Agent.com, Orlando Sentinel.com/Business*)

International Visits Up 9 Percent in First Quarter

The Department of Commerce reports that 3.9 million international visitors traveled to the U.S. in March, an increase of 13 percent over March 2006. Total visitation in the first quarter of this year was up 9 percent from the same period in 2006. International visitors spent \$9.6 billion during the month, up 11 percent over March 2006. Canadian visitation grew 5 percent for the month of March and by the same amount for the first quarter. Arrivals from Mexico traveling to interior U.S. points were up 40 percent in March. Overseas arrivals, excluding Canada and Mexico, increased 14 percent in March and are up 8 percent in the first quarter. Visitation from Western Europe was up 18 percent in March and 10 percent for the first quarter. For more details, contact 202-482-2887. (*Special to TA*)

Study Sees Boost in U.S. Trips in 2007

Americans are expected to take 1,254.6 million domestic person-trips in 2007, a 2.3 percent increase over the previous year, according to a report on U.S. tourism released by IbisWorld. However, the average number of nights spent in the U.S. per vacation trip this year is expected to decline slightly to 16.1 nights. IbisWorld estimates that, in constant 2006 prices, the U.S. tourism industry will generate \$1.188 billion in revenue in 2007, which represents a real growth rate of 2.0 percent. This is compared to the annual growth rate of 3.5 percent for the previous five years. (*Modern Agent.com*)

Phoenix Ranks Sixth as Atlanta Passes Chicago as Busiest Airport

Delta Air Lines is bigger than United Airlines, and Southwest Airlines is bigger than either, when size is measured by passenger enplanements regardless of length of trip. US Airways and America West, corporately merged though still working to consolidate operationally, are together larger than either Northwest Airlines or Continental Airlines, according to first-quarter enplanement figures released this month by the U.S. Bureau of Transportation Statistics. The industry usually measures itself by revenue passenger miles, since longer flights bring in more revenue, and by that metric the largest airlines, in order, are American, United, Delta, Continental and Northwest, Continental having recently expanded its way from fifth to fourth place. Indeed, the BTS figures show that by international enplanements alone the top three are American, United and Continental.

Passenger enplanements, first quarter:

- American: 23.3 billion
- Southwest: 22.9 billion
- Delta: 17.1 billion
- United: 16.3 billion
- US Airways-America West: 13.9 billion
- Northwest: 12.9 billion
- Continental: 11.5 billion

Of the above figures, Delta traffic is down 5.1 percent from year-before levels while Continental is up 4.4 percent; the rest moved less in either direction. The same report ranked airports by passenger traffic and found that Atlanta's Hartsfield airport is now much busier than Chicago's

O'Hare by the only metric passengers care about: how many passengers are passing through the facility.

Top U.S. airports by first quarter enplanements:

- Atlanta: 9.6 billion.
- Chicago O'Hare: 8.0 billion.
- Dallas-Ft. Worth: 6.6 billion.
- Denver: 5.5 billion.
- Los Angeles: 5.4 billion.
- Phoenix: 5.1 billion.
- Las Vegas: 5.0 billion.
- Houston: 4.8 billion.
- Orlando: 4.1 billion.
- Minneapolis-St. Paul: 4.0 billion.

Denver and Orlando stand out in the list for having a very low percentage of international enplanements. Las Vegas has more domestic enplanements than Los Angeles does. (*The Phoenix Business Journal*)

Even “Accidental” Tourists Have appetite for New Culinary Tour Trend

A growing number of tourists say they are deliberate culinary travelers, but a substantial number of others identify themselves as "accidentally" participating in food and wine activities simply because they are available. Interest in the culinary travel market continues to grow, as evidenced by data from 2,364 American leisure travelers and co-sponsored by *Gourmet* magazine, the Travel Industry Association and the International Culinary Tourism Association. A whopping 60 percent of US leisure travelers say they're interested in participating in such activities as cooking classes and winery tours, visiting farmer's markets and attending food and wine festivals while on vacation. "Culinary tourism has reached the tipping point as a niche and an industry," said Erik Wolf, president and CEO of the International Culinary Tourism Association, in a statement that accompanied the survey. Forty-six percent in the survey were deliberate "foodie" travelers, while another 26 percent were the accidental tourists. Why is interest in culinary travel reaching its boiling point? Industry watchers point to two possible reasons. First could be the success of the Food Network and its spread of celebrity chefs, whose successes have bubbled over from the kitchen to TV and magazines. In addition, as clients travel the world more, they look for different takes on their favorite destinations. "We have a lot of experienced travelers in the world right now, and a lot of people have been to Tuscany, so there's something about going back and approaching it from a different angle," said Steve Snapp, creative director for Classic Journeys, a California-based operator that offers worldwide culinary tours. (*Report by David Wilkening, TravelMole e-Newsletter*)

Super Bowl XLII Countdown Clock Unveiled at Sky Harbor Airport

Thousands of daily visitors to the Valley can now start counting down to Super Bowl XLII. Arizona Super Bowl Host Committee Chairman Mike Kennedy, Host Committee President Bob Sullivan and Phoenix Mayor Phil Gordon unveiled the Super Bowl XLII countdown clock at Phoenix Sky Harbor Airport. The 3 foot tall by 7.5 foot wide clock is on display in the baggage carousel area inside Terminal Four at the airport. "We are thrilled to share the countdown clock with so many Arizona visitors," said Chairman Kennedy. "As the clock counts down, we continue to ramp up our community programs and events throughout the state." "Every month, more than two million passengers use Terminal Four," said Phoenix Mayor Phil Gordon. "This is a great opportunity for Arizona to spread the word." The Arizona Super Bowl Host Committee is

a private, non-profit Arizona corporation that serves as a liaison with the National Football League in organizing local efforts and preparations leading up to the Super Bowl. It has the responsibility to implement Arizona's action plan for Super Bowl XLII, which culminates with the game on February 3, 2008 at University of Phoenix Stadium in Glendale.